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Hugh Templar's Motto

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Tract Society (Great Britain)

1489. f. 1838.





THE LAST SYMPHONY,

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HUGH TEMPLAR'S MOTTO.

BY LOUISA EMILY DOBRÉE,
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"A KNOTLESS THREAD," ETC.



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HUGH TEMPLAR'S MOTTO.



CHAPTER I.

HUGH TEMPLAR.

IT was a fine evening in early spring. The sun was setting over the hill beneath which lay the little village of Westerton in the south of England; and as its golden beams shone through the trees you could see that the latter were already getting a faint tinge of green, and that in a few weeks' time they would be in full leaf.

Westerton was a pretty little village. The houses were neatly built, and in most of the cottage windows were flowers, carefully watched and watered by their owners. There were trees bordering the road and hanging over the carriage way, and the background was formed by the prettily wooded hill rising in the west.

There were very few shops, and, besides the parsonage, the doctor's, and lawyer's respective dwellings, there were not many large houses in the village. From nearly every part of Westerton, however, you could see the towers of the castle rising away from the extensive grounds that encircled it. The castle was a fine old place, very much out of repair both inside and out, but possessing a grandeur and dignity that a modern building can rarely have.

The castle—it had always borne that name—had belonged to the Templar family for many years. It had never been occupied by people of any other family since it was built, and until quite lately it had been in the possession of Mr. Templar, who was nearly the last of his name. He lived there with his motherless child, Hugh, who was fifteen at the time my story opens.

The two, father and son, had known a very happy life in the old castle. They were all in

all to each other; and Hugh looked up to and respected his father, as he had every reason to do, Mr. Templar being a truly earnest Christian man, who lived a simple, pure life, and tried to lead his child in the right way by teaching him to look to his Saviour as his great Example, whose life he must copy, while trusting Him as his Redeemer.

Hugh grew up under his father's careful training as a child known by his doings that his work was pure and his heart right in the sight of God.

He was not by any means a perfect child, but his was a simple religion that was no mere formality. It was deeply rooted in his heart; and faith, with its outcome of love and hope, strengthened his life, and made it real and true.

Although they lived in that large castle, the Templars were anything but rich. If he had been well off, the idea of repairing the castle a little would doubtless have entered Mr. Templar's mind. Perhaps it may have done so, but he had no means of putting such an idea into action. The castle itself wanted looking after, and as for the grounds, untidiness reigned there supreme, for the old deaf gardener was very infirm, and kept the gardens in a very careless fashion.

There was, however, a natural beauty in the pretty little brook, bordered by deep green grass, with its fringe of forget-me-nots; in the large pond, on the surface of which in summer time floated water-lilies; in the grand old trees, avenues, and in the quaint terraced gardens, that made amends in a wonderful way for the neglect and disorder. Despite all the untidiness and want of care that marked the whole estate, it had a beauty and a charm that nothing could take away.

Want of money, and a consequent need of the strictest economy, had been the normal state of things at the castle for some years, until matters had, a few weeks before my story opens, become much worse.

Throughout his life Mr. Templar had lived within his income, and had avoided contracting any debts. But lately, attracted by the golden promises of a new mining company, he had invested largely in its shares, and that, unfortunately, with borrowed money. The enterprise proved a failure, and the shareholders' money was irretrievably lost.

Good man as Mr. Templar was, a gentleman by nature as well as birth, and worthy of his old name, he knew no more about business than a child of four; and when Mr. Hay, the

lawyer, after going well into his affairs, showed him exactly how matters stood, he was greatly distressed.

The castle must be sold. In no other way could the difficulty be met; and after much deliberation this was decided upon.

Here was a great blow to Mr. Templar. He was much attached to the old castle and to the estates he had lived on all his life; and to leave them all, and let them go into strange hands, was very hard. It was a great trial both for himself and Hugh; but still he was bound, both as a Christian and a gentleman, to do this rather than to live on in debt, and to incur fresh liabilities from which he saw no chance of freeing himself as time went on.

He wandered about the grounds, and seemed as if he could not look often or long enough at his favourite walks. He went to the pretty summer-house he had built for his wife near the brook. He remembered how pleased she had been when he had taken her there, his sweet little bride; and again he almost felt the light touch of her hand upon his arm, and heard her voice, now hushed in death these thirteen years, murmuring her thanks to him in the fair June sunshine.

The old home was very dear to him; it was

all so bound up with his life that he was sorely tried in having to say adieu to it all. He hardly dared think of the day, so soon to come, when he should have to leave it.

But in this life we need never forecast difficulties and trials. They rarely come to us exactly as we anticipate them ; and when Mr. Templar left the castle, he did so in a very different way from that which he had anticipated.

For one morning Mr. Templar was found dead in his study, his head bent forward pressing on the table before him. The doctor of the village, when hurriedly called in, was not surprised, for he alone besides Mr. Templar knew for some time that the latter's heart was affected, and that at any moment death might come.

All Westerton mourned for him, and pitied his orphan child, who was left almost penniless. When all expenses had been paid, and after the sale of the castle, there remained to Hugh only about a hundred pounds. The doctor took him home for the present until matters were arranged ; and soon difficulties as to his future were settled by a letter which came from Mr. Carlisle, the late Mrs. Templar's brother.

In this letter Mr. Carlisle offered Hugh a

home, saying he would educate and bring him up as one of his own children. Mr. Carlisle said briefly that his late brother-in-law, Mr. Templar, had rendered him services which he never could repay, and that he was glad to be of any use to his child. He also added that he had not known of Mr. Templar's difficulties, or he would have endeavoured to help him. They had rarely met or corresponded, which explained his ignorance of Mr. Templar's affairs. Dr. Gray liked the tone of Mr. Carlisle's letter, and told Hugh that he was very fortunate in having such a kind uncle to befriend him. So Hugh's boxes were packed, the final farewells, which were so very painful to him, were nearly all made, and Hugh's last evening at Westerton had come.

The evening was a lovely one; the sunset rays were glinting through the trees and making the gilt cock on the church steeple glitter and sparkle. Hugh had been to the castle in the morning.

He had asked leave to go alone, and Dr. Gray made no objection. He fully entered into the feelings which prompted the request.

Hugh opened the well-known gate and went up the avenue, stopping for a moment to look at the pond, which was to be seen through the

opening in the trees. Then he went up to the house itself and roamed through the different rooms. All the old furniture was gone. It had been sold, and the rich Birmingham manufacturer who had bought the place was having new things down from London.

The upholsterers and cabinet-makers were there taking measurements and planning arrangements for the new furniture and fittings, which were all being "done" by contract.

How different were the quaint oak tables and tapestried chairs, the faded hangings and old-fashioned furniture, that had been in the rooms for so many years !

But Mr. Kotton had a genuine dislike to old things. He was rich, having made his money in trade, and his taste showed itself in gaudy, showy furniture, and new fashions in everything. Outside there were plasterers at work, and the castle was being thoroughly repaired inside and out.

As Hugh in his deep mourning passed through the hall, a glance and whisper from the workmen was all the notice he received. They guessed who he was, and with unusual tact and kindness they let him make his way through the old familiar rooms without interfering with him.

Hugh was tall, and had a very good figure, dark-brown eyes, good features, fair complexion, and curly, light-brown hair.

At last he had done, and had said a last good-bye to the old castle. As he closed the gate behind him, the sound jarred on his feelings. The sensation was as if that gate was shutting him off from the old happy life, and from his bright childhood.

He was now going into the world ; at least, going to his uncle's seemed so to him. There is always something mysterious to a child in any sudden change. And Hugh had much of the child about him, despite his fifteen years, and his "big boy" appearance.

Then he went to the church, and asking for the key, let himself in, that he might look for the last time at the seat he and his father used to sit in, just underneath the low stone-carved pulpit which Mr. Templar had given to the church some years ago in memory of his wife. Then Hugh had to take leave of the organ—the dear old organ that he was so fond of.

The boy had a great love for music, and the choir-master of the church had given him a few organ lessons. When he left, the stranger who took his place had not been so kind to Hugh as Mr. Drakes. But the boy had made

the most of the teaching he had received, and took delight in going to the church and playing for hours. Very few knew where he went, and when they heard the organ being played, only thought that the organist was there.

Hugh had happy times at the organ. There was not a spark of creative genius in the lad, he could not compose a line, or originate an idea in music; but when he played over the simple chants and scraps from classical composers, he gave to them much love and care. They spoke to him in a way he understood, and in his soul was a passionate love for music, more especially for that of the organ.

There was a piano at the castle, rather out of tune; and Mr. Templar once asked Hugh if he wished to have it put in order, but the latter did not seem to care for it. The boy cared for the organ, and the organ alone.

Going up into the organ-loft, he opened the instrument with his own key, and began playing. It was an easy symphony of Beethoven, and he played it very well, though his face was sad when it was over, and he closed the organ for the last time. That morning he had said good-bye to his old master, who kept a boys' school about a mile distant from the castle.

Hugh used to go there every day, and he had some friends amongst the boys that he was very sorry to part with. The last visit that he paid that evening was to an old friend of his father, Lady Drayton. She was an invalid, and lived with her son, the clergyman of the parish, who was a widower with a large family. Mr. Drayton was away just then, and a stranger was taking the duty for him.

Hugh found Lady Drayton alone, seated as usual in her chair by the window, looking out on the garden, and watching the sunset clouds. Hugh was soon seated near her. She was a good friend to him, and Hugh loved her dearly. Her face was a singularly lovely one. There was great beauty of feature, and a calm that shone over her whole countenance and was especially noticeable in her quiet blue eyes.

There was a restful feeling in only being near her, in looking at her and hearing her gentle, sweet voice. She had known much sorrow, and this had purified her and drawn out her natural charms of character, instead of leaving her peevish and cross. She was a truly earnest Christian, and she was indeed thankful when she saw her "child Hugh," as she called the son of her old friend, growing up in the fear of God.

"This is our last evening together, Hugh," said Lady Drayton, laying her hand upon Hugh's curly head. "I am not going to preach to you and give you a great deal of advice. I am not sure that you would remember it, and—"

"Oh, yes, I should," said Hugh, who felt at that moment in the humour for listening to as much counsel and advice as Lady Drayton was inclined to give him. He knew that he was going out of reach of her gentle words, and might not for a long time hear them again.

"Well, I shall not try you, Hugh. I am only going to tell you that you must in your new life, as in your old, try and remember always that God is your Father, who loves and watches over you every moment of your life. His great love He has shown by giving His dear Son to die for you. You know your Saviour, Hugh; you have felt the need of being forgiven."

Hugh bowed his head, for somehow now he could not speak. There was something so earnest in Lady Drayton's voice, he felt as if he must listen to every word, and remember all she said.

"And now, as a child reconciled to your Heavenly Father, try and *walk worthy* of the

vocation wherewith you are called. Always bear in mind that you are a child of the light, and that you should try in everything to act as a child of God should. I have here, dear boy, an old-fashioned seal that I want you to keep. Your father used often to look at it and admire it."

Hugh looked up, wondering at what seemed to him rather a sudden change in the conversation.

The seal was a large topaz, and on it was engraved two words. Hugh asked what they were.

"Two French words, Hugh. *Noblesse oblige*. You have heard them before?"

"Oh yes," said Hugh, carelessly; "I learnt them in a list Mr. Wain once gave us of foreign mottoes and maxims and their meanings. I remember *Noblesse oblige* meant, 'Rank imposes obligation;' much is rightly expected of one of high birth and station." Then he added, fearing lest he had seemed ungracious in not saying even thank you for a present he certainly cared very little about, "Thank you very much, dear grannie; it was very good of you to think of me." For Hugh often called Lady Drayton grannie.

"Dear Hugh, I want you to take these two

words, *Noblesse oblige*, as your motto. Will you?"

"Yes, I will if you like," said Hugh, surprised at the request.

"You have given me just now the literal translation of their meaning, as far as that goes. It goes much further, Hugh; and I should like the spirit of those words to be the influence on your life, to guide you and help you; and if only you cling to the truth they contain, the remembrance of them will solve many difficulties for you."

"I don't understand them well now," said Hugh.

"You may not. But still, if you will only try and see the grand truths that they contain, though at present you only grasp their meaning in the letter, you will continue unravelling them until you hold them in all their beauty all your life through."

"I do not quite see," said Hugh, "how the obligations of rank can affect *me*. My father was a gentleman and of a high family," he continued, in a slightly boastful tone of voice, "but—"

"Your father was a *Christian*, Hugh, and that is a rank and calling far higher than any earthly station: And you as a Christian boy

can, if only you will to do so, live according to the rules and standard that you find in your Bible, and follow your Lord, who is your example. Walk as His child, and you can have no higher rank; and as for obligations, dear boy, if only you do this faithfully, you will find out very soon what the obligations are. Just as a man of high earthly rank feels that because he is a gentleman, because he has the good old family name, that anything mean, cowardly, dishonest, or impure, is unworthy of that position, so the children of light should live and walk, living pure, holy lives, impelled to do so by the remembrance of whose they are. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, I do, grannie. I like the motto," said Hugh.

"I thought you would when you entered more into its inner meaning. Let *Noblesse oblige* be your motto, Hugh; and remember that it is *one side* of the great truth that should guide us in everything—to do our work faithfully, to live our lives purely, to be true and earnest—obliged to be so by virtue of our calling, and *because it is right*."

Then, after they had talked on other subjects, Lady Drayton pointed out to Hugh that his father had fulfilled the spirit of the motto

in selling the castle to pay his debts, instead of remaining in it, involving himself in further difficulties and defrauding others, even on such a plausible excuse, by so doing.

Then Hugh said "Good-bye;" and the next morning he left Westerton.

As he took his place in the up-train to London he looked out of the window to get a last view of the castle towers rising through the trees; and then, when he could see them no more, he sat quietly back in the corner of the carriage; and feeling now that he had really left his dear old home, he burst into tears. He was alone in the carriage, and could cry on unnoticed.

For a little while he felt heartbroken. Not until then had he realised how severely the trial of leaving Westerton would touch him. He had had so much to do that he had hardly had time until now to think. Besides his own packing, Dr. Gray had always managed to find occupation for him, knowing that plenty to do was the finest remedy for fretting and the depression that Hugh was then feeling.

All his old associations with Westerton rose up before him, and he was very sad. But youth will assert itself, and the new scenery and lovely

day helped him to cheer up and distracted his thoughts ; and by the time he reached London, changed into the train for Elchester, and was fairly on his way to his new home, he was much brighter than he had been for the last few weeks.





CHAPTER II.

THE PRIORY AND ITS INMATES.

IT was late in the afternoon before Hugh reached Elchester.

The train puffed slowly up alongside of the platform. Hugh opened the carriage door and jumped out. He heard his own name called, and turning saw a gentleman he guessed was his uncle. And so it proved to be. Faithful to his promise, Mr. Carlisle was there to meet his nephew.

Mr. Carlisle was a very tall, stately, and commanding-looking man, with a grave, almost stern expression of countenance.

The tone of his letters had been kind, though they had been stiffly worded; but he himself looked, as Hugh privately thought, as if he had swallowed a poker!

"Here I am, uncle!" exclaimed Hugh, who after his long journey was very glad to have arrived.

"Ah! have you much luggage?"

"It is there, uncle—I see it, it is all right," replied Hugh, as his uncle shook hands with him in rather a stiff way.

"Four boxes and a carpet-bag. What an enormous quantity for one boy!"

"I brought all my books and things," said Hugh, "and I could not cram them in tighter."

"Well, never mind, don't explain, *pray!*" said Mr. Carlisle, who had a great horror of discussions, and indeed of much talking. He was a very silent man; but, though silent, was by no means unobservant.

"Here, Jones," he continued, addressing a porter this time, "wheel that luggage up to the Priory as soon as you can."

"Very well, sir," answered Jones.

Hugh then accompanied his uncle along the platform, up to the wooden bridge, and then down some steps that lead in to the main road towards Elchester.

They walked along silently, only exchanging a few words now and then, and Hugh began to feel a little shy of his uncle. Generally speaking he was not shy of strangers, and being

quite free from self-consciousness, he had a naturally pleasant manner that often won friends for him. But his uncle, who marched along so pompously by his side, was not very encouraging; and Hugh, with the ready judgment of the young, began to attribute it to his uncle's regretting having asked him to his home.

Hugh, however, was very much mistaken. Under that stiff exterior and cold manner there was a kind heart beating, and a nature that would have been generous had not reserved habits been contracted and a kind of pride allowed to take root and close it to its higher impulses.

Mr. Carlisle was at the moment very much touched at seeing for the first time his dead sister's child; but habit was strong upon him, and he was so used to hide all his better feelings under a coating of ice, that the more deeply he felt the stiffer did his manner become—the colder his expression.

Mr. Carlisle at last broke the silence by asking Hugh a little about his journey.

Hugh answered his questions, but said very little on his own account, and Mr. Carlisle did not mention his father to him at all.

After walking through the small town of

Elcheater they struck out on a new-looking road off the High Street, and at last reached an old-fashioned house which bore on the gate the name of the "Priory."

The house was low, thatched, and, being built in an irregular style and covered with ivy, was very picturesque.

When they reached the hall door Mr. Carlisle turned suddenly to Hugh and held out his hand, saying, "You are very welcome, my boy, to your new home."

Hugh felt then, that though the words were few, they were sincere and kindly meant.

"Your Aunt Edith is lying down, I know," said Mr. Carlisle; "so I will send for Fraulein Valheim, and ask her to take you up to the schoolroom." Suiting his action to his words, Mr. Carlisle rang the bell of the sitting-room he and Hugh had entered, and on a tall housemaid making her appearance, he asked that Fraulein Valheim should be asked to come down to him, this lady, as Mr. Carlisle explained to Hugh, being governess to the younger children. In a few minutes the Fraulein came down. She was short, very thin, and had very light-coloured eyes, seen through the medium of spectacles, and some sandy hair was strained off her forehead and knotted up tightly behind.

She understood and spoke English tolerably, that being the only language besides German that she was acquainted with. She was a good, well-meaning little thing, and though not clever was very painstaking. She had to work hard for her living, and had, besides supporting herself, to send money to help her invalid father at Elberfeld. He lived there with her only brother, who did not earn enough by his painting to be able to add much to the family fund.

The larger portion of the burden fell on the shoulders of little Marie Valheim; and though heartsore at parting from her beloved Germany, she felt she must do it, especially when this situation at the Carlises' was offered to her most opportunely. The salary was nearly double that which she could get at Elberfeld, and so she went. She was very lonely. Warm-hearted and affectionate, she had fancied that she should have made friends with the young Carlises; and when she found that her position in the house was very clearly defined as that of governess, and nothing more, she naturally grieved over the fact. The children resented her interference with them, as they imagined it to be, when she tried to take an interest in their occupations. The elder ones ignored her

altogether, excepting when she was teaching them German; the little ones, too, were her pupils, and that was all.

Marie Valheim had once heard that some English people treated their governesses as if they were upper servants; but, somehow or other, it never occurred to her that it would be her fate to be treated in like manner. However, the pay was good, and though she had much hard work she did not dislike it, only—There she would pause, and look at her little view of Elberfeld, painted on a wooden box she had in her bedroom, and think with a sad heart how she would like to see her home again. But she never was able to get to Germany for the holidays. She remained on at the Priory, at Mr. Carlisle's request; and though she so much wished to see her dear Elberfeld again, she was thankful that she was not obliged to spend money on a journey, or needed to obtain a holiday engagement. She had been two years at the Priory, and the *Heimweh** was as strong upon her as it had been the first day she had set foot in England.

The schoolroom was at the back of the house. It was a large room, and Hugh felt sure they were approaching it, the noise was so great.

* Home-sickness.

He was soon inside the room and being introduced by the Fraulein to his cousins, who were all there with the exception of Daisy, the eldest girl of eighteen.

Eric was a tall lad of seventeen. Peggy, who was sixteen, came next; she was tall, slight and plain. There was a strong family likeness running through all the Carlises. They all took after their father, were tall, slight, had good figures and his aquiline nose, and all but Peggy his rather stern expression. With her it was marvellously softened, and her countenance was pleasing, though she was so plain. The "plain one" of the family she was decidedly, for all the others were handsome; and besides the family likeness I have named, they had all grey eyes, with dark eyelashes and eyebrows, and light-brown hair. Flora, who came next to Peggy, was an exception in the matter of hair. She had long golden locks hanging to her waist. She was just fourteen. The twins of eleven came next, Morris and Ada, and then little Charlie, who was a very small boy of eight, and very pretty. It was a wonder that the boys were at home, for it was a half-holiday, but a football match that had been fixed for that afternoon had been postponed on account of the heavy rain that had

fallen the night before. The ground, already a bad one, was found to be too wet to play on.

Hugh was to go to the same school as the boys. Eric and Morris only went as yet, for Charlie learnt his lessons with the Fraulein at home.

It was rather an awkward moment for all the cousins when the introduction was over. *They* had not expected Hugh so early, and *he* felt shy coming into a room full of utter strangers. The sensation of shyness being a new one, he felt all the more uncomfortable.

"Won't you come near the fire?" said Peggy, kindly.

"Thank you," said Hugh; "I will. I am rather cold, although we walked up from the station at a good pace."

"Yes, and after a journey one—"

A scream from Ada interrupted the flow of Peggy's remarks. Unlike most twins, Ada and Morris were anything but united. They squabbled constantly, and had been known to have really desperate fights. Morris was very strong, and Ada was not, so the former got the best of it in most cases.

"Leave me alone, Morris!"

"I was not doing anything to you," answered Morris, who for once was guiltless of the charge of teasing Ada.

"You pulled my hair—you know you did!"

"I did not."

"You *did*!" screamed Ada, in a tone that made Hugh open his eyes. With all her delicate, refined appearance, the harsh, rude voice seemed a marked contrast.

"*Ach!* do not have the quarrel, I beg—I pray," said the Fraulein, who, having performed her duty of introducing Hugh to his cousins, had subsided into her usual chair by the fire with her knitting.

The Fraulein had the same skill in that occupation which most German women have. Whether she was sitting, standing, teaching, or reading, often even walking, the knitting went on; and Charlie, who was a child of an inquiring spirit, had once gravely asked her if she knitted in her sleep!

"I pulled your hair, Ada," said Eric; "I can't resist those tails; they are too tempting." Ada had her hair in two long plaits down her back.

"Well, then, another time do resist, please," said Ada, looking affectionately at her long plait, and tying the bow on at the end again. She was rather afraid of Eric, and so she did not say any more. In a war of words she generally got the best of it, just as Morris, in a

quarrel where physical force was required, came off victor.

The momentary break occasioned by Hugh's entrance was at an end. Eric and Morris continued a discussion about their relative number of innings at the last cricket match. Charlie went on with his game of bricks, Flora was busy with ribbons and lace making a necktie, and Ada, having rearranged her injured plait, took to her doll.

Peggy, on continuing her work, discovered that she had no more wool. Rising, she took a skein out of her drawer, and called to Ada to come and hold it for her.

"No; I am busy," said Ada, shortly; and Flora declined to leave her ribbons.

"Let me hold it for you," said Hugh, coming to the rescue, and holding out his hands to receive the skein.

Peggy stared. She was not accustomed to such attentions from her brothers, and she had long ago come to the conclusion that boys were never courteous to girls, or, indeed, to each other.

Hugh took it as a matter of course. His father had taught him early that courtesy should always be one of the marks of a Christian, and that principle went much farther, and was more lasting than the feeling which prompts

courtesy from a man to a woman simply on the ground of chivalry.

The former is just *Noblesse oblige* bearing on the question, and settling it in accordance with its highest meaning.

Morris noticed the action, and nudged Eric, who looked at Hugh, and the two laughed. With Eric it was a short, sneering laugh; with Morris a giggle of intense amusement.

The whispered words from Charlie of "What a muff, I say!" caught Hugh's ears, and the colour came into his cheeks. His head was bent over the wool, and he went on holding the skein as if he had not heard.

Peggy turned and gave an imploring look at the boys, who, however, did not mind her, but laughed again, and exchanged audible remarks.

"What a Molly, to be holding wool for its cousin!" said Morris.

"Catch one of us doing it for Peg!" answered Charlie.

"Or even for Daisy," said Morris.

Daisy, be it known, ruled her brothers and sisters as much as she could, and she had not a little in her power. There was always to be said that she was her father's favourite, and she could apply to him to settle any dispute or punish an offender.

This latter was an extreme measure, and Daisy did not often resort to it; but she had it in her power to do so, and it was a threat that she rather enjoyed holding over the heads of the younger ones, who themselves were too much afraid of Mr. Carlisle to tell tales of each other.

Poor Hugh felt rather lonely as he sat by the schoolroom fire holding Peggy's wool, and hearing the remarks made upon his act of simple courtesy to his cousin.

The conversation, however, changed in a moment when the door opened and Daisy entered. She had the same stately carriage as her father, and with her tall figure, and an indescribable air about her that seemed to affect every tone and movement, she certainly was as unlike the little flower whose name she bore as can be imagined. She was handsome rather than pretty, but her face would have been more pleasing had she not had that slight, very slight, curl in her lip.

"How do you do, Hugh? I am sorry I was not here to meet you, but I was detained when I was out," said Daisy.

"So you are Daisy," said Hugh, looking up to Daisy as he rose to shake hands with her. He was a tall boy, but still he had to look up to his cousin.

"Yes, I am," said Daisy, smiling complacently; and as she said the words there was a pompous tone that made you wonder after all whether she had simply said, "Yes, I am," or had replied, "I am the Princess Daisy."

"Come down and see mamma, Hugh," said Daisy. "She is awake now, and told me to bring you down to her. She is always more or less of an invalid, and she keeps very quiet generally in the afternoons after her tea. Not that way, that is the dining-room;" and Daisy led the way through the drawing-room to a tiny boudoir, which was beautifully fitted up with pale salmon-coloured *cretonne*, and a good deal of old oak, which threw out its delicate shade.

This was Mrs. Carlisle's taste, and the oak, darkened by age, suited the quaint appearance of the old room, the room itself having formed part of the ancient priory which had stood on the site of the present house. Mrs. Carlisle was a quiet, sickly-looking woman, with very limited powers of conversation beyond the subject of her own ailments, and very unlimited faith in the capabilities of her eldest daughter.

Daisy, she thought, could do everything; and she left all in her hands. Daisy, nothing

loth, took up the position gladly ; and I think that the feeling that she was virtually mistress of the house made her all the more indulgent to her mother's unceasing complaints, and her hobby of the water-cure.

Hugh had a little talk with his aunt, and then the bell rang for the school tea. Eric and Daisy had been promoted to dining at seven with their parents.

"You can find your way up," said Daisy ; and Hugh, answering "Yes," proceeded to go up to the schoolroom.

The room was at the end of the corridor, and he could see that the door was slightly ajar. When he pushed it farther open, however, a shower of bits of paper fell on his head, and a shout of laughter greeted his appearance, which was comical, it must be confessed, for the waste-paper basket was now quite over his head. It had been placed, reversed, on the door slightly left ajar by Morris, and so arranged, with a skill worthy of a better object, that when Hugh entered, the paper should fall, basket and all, on him. Morris's hopes had never risen to the height of thinking that the basket would so fall as to go neatly over Hugh like a long cap, but so it did, and the former screamed with laughing.

Hugh felt very angry at this trick being played upon him, and he was on the point of bursting forth with some angry words, when suddenly he remembered his two words, *Noblesse oblige*. I cannot tell you exactly how they affected him just then, only that they certainly helped him to control his temper by a violent effort. He tried, but less successfully, to join in the laugh against himself at the trick he had been played.

Then they sat down to tea, and the evening passed very slowly, as it seemed to Hugh.

Hugh had a very hasty temper, and this failing was what he had most constantly to struggle against. God helping him, he was nearly always able to control it, but it was always with more or less difficulty.

At home he had had very little to try him. His father's was a mild, equable temper, and when Hugh felt hot and angry, the very sight of his father's face, with its expression of peace, and the calm of his spirit as evinced in his manner, sufficed to cool him. At school the boys had been trying sometimes, and Hugh lost his temper with them more often than he cared to remember ; but, taking one thing with another, he had certainly very little to irritate him in that as in other ways.

He found it a comparatively easy thing to live as a Christian when he was at home. He was then shielded by force of surrounding circumstances from much temptation, and he had the example of his father and the loving influence of Lady Drayton to help him, so that he found really very few difficulties to contend with. But before the first evening drew to a close, Hugh discovered that at Elchester all would be very different. Instead of having any shield from temptation, he was left to himself, and must do without human aid, and turn alone to God for help and guidance.

When Hugh got to his room that night he thought over all the events of the day. Just before going to his room Peggy had run up to him in the corridor, and said, hastily,

"Hugh, I know we have not said much to you—I mean about our being glad that you are come, but I want to tell you that we are glad, and you must try and feel at home."

Poor Hugh was feeling at that moment that all was very unhomelike, but he was glad of Peggy's words, and thanked her for them.

"I know it can't be easy," continued Peggy. "Leaving Westerton must have been very sad for you."

"It was," assented Hugh, biting his lip to prevent himself from crying at the very sound of the old name.

Peggy saw that he could not talk of it, and so she soon said "Good night;" and the cousins parted, Hugh instinctively feeling that he and Peggy were friends in the true sense of the word, although they had known each other but a few hours, and had made no outward compact of friendship.

Hugh then went to his room, and finding a low, bright fire burning in the grate, he drew his chair near it and gave himself up to the luxury of thinking quietly over all the events of the day.

He was more ruffled than he had been for a long time by that trick of the paper-basket being played upon him. A harmless sort of trick at any other time, it certainly was not kind of Morris to have done it to him the very first night at his new home. Hugh said that to himself rather bitterly.

However, there are worse things in the world to bear than being made the subject of a practical joke, and Hugh's thoughts soon turned to the seven cousins with whom he was now to be in daily contact.

First impressions go a long way, and Hugh

had not been very favourably impressed by his cousins. They were all very different from the boys and girls he had hitherto known, and it was only of Peggy that he thought with any pleasure.

Hugh did not know it then, but later he found out that Peggy was trying to live for her Saviour—that Saviour she had only lately learnt to know and love.

Peggy was very ignorant of a great deal that Hugh knew, and her steps in the Christian path had been feeble and few; but still her heart was right with God, and in His own good time He would help her and teach her.

Life would be very different now to Hugh. He thought it all over as he sat by the fire. It would be difficult, far more so than it had been at home, for him to keep his temper, and that temper, he felt, would be tried very much indeed. That he already knew very well; and that he would be tested, not only by boyish tricks, but by being laughed at for doing what was right. He had seen the look of astonishment on Morris's face, and heard the giggle that succeeded it, when he bent his head and silently asked a blessing. Grace was never said by the Fraulein, and he saw that it was not the custom in the schoolroom.

Then he thought of the evening before, when he had been in Westerton, and he fancied himself again back in the Parsonage, listening to his dear grannie's voice, as she told him about the motto she wished him to make his own.

It was his own now, by the definite purpose of taking it up and remembering it constantly. But he had lived under its influence unconsciously for some time.

It is the great motto that every Christian, of whatever age or rank, should have as his own.

First it involves a recognition of the high calling a Christian has. It is one that the angels, pure and holy as they are, can never know; and has in it a nobleness, in one way, beyond even theirs. As redeemed sinners, who have been led by the Holy Spirit to seek their Lord, and from Him obtain that pardon which alone can gain them access to heaven, or power to follow Christ here below, Christians are called to a struggle and victory, a fight and conquest, a witness before the world for Him, "who is before God for them," that the angels know not of.

Christ as their Example, Christ as their King, themselves His servants, their calling is high; and the outcome should be pure works and consecrated lives. Their rule of life is very simple.

Just the commandments of the old Law, obeyed in the far deeper Gospel sense ; obeyed because there is a necessity laid upon them by virtue of their calling to live as their King would have them do,—to strive to be like Him, to follow His holy life, to keep Him ever before them, and let His words of counsel and guidance, His commandments, abide in them, so that they may bring forth much fruit,—the fruit of faith in overcoming sin in themselves ; and the fruit of good works, not as a means by which they may attain salvation, but as outflowing from their lives simply because the love of Christ, already dwelling] in their hearts, constrains them.

That love of Christ is a real power in their lives. It makes the difference—that wonderful, all-separating difference between one who loves God and one who serves the world. It fixes their standard, it guides them in matters great and small ; and it was this love of Christ—nay, rather, it was Christ Himself—that would help Hugh Templar in his new life, as He had done in his old one.





CHAPTER III.

HAVE YOU SEEN?

“**H**UGH, will you be so good as to come down here for a few minutes?” said Mr. Carlisle, the next morning, as Hugh was buckling the strap round his books before accompanying his cousins to school.

Eric and Morris were in the schoolroom looking for their books, which, as usual, were not forthcoming at the last moment, untidiness in every form and shape being the one point of resemblance between the two brothers. They were both extremely disorderly, but if you had to choose between them Morris was by far the worse. He generally went by the name of “Have you seen?” in the house and at school. These words were continually in his mouth, used by him when he was searching for some mislaid

property. And, like most untidy people, he was glad to have the assistance of others in his quest.

At this moment he was saying, "Have you seen—oh, *have* you seen my Latin grammar? Charlie, Ada, Flora, can't you tell me? Peggy, have *you* seen it?"

All answered "No ;" so he had to search for himself. Hugh meanwhile was in the study, where Mr. Carlisle had seated himself in a large leather-covered arm-chair that stood before the writing-table.

"Now, Hugh, I want a word with you. I have told you before that this is your home for the future—no, no thanks, *pray*," said Mr. Carlisle, hastily, waving his hand to stop Hugh's words of thanks.

All the same, the latter could not help saying a few words expressive of his appreciation of his uncle's kindness to him.

Mr. Carlisle did not wish to be thanked. He was a truly good man, very reserved and chary of talking of what lay very near his heart. He was none the less really a good man for all that ; only people show that they are the King's servants in various ways. Temperament, disposition, circumstances, have all something to do with this, and naturally influence the life.

With Mr. Carlisle it was an effort that few would perhaps have understood to talk of the religion which guided his actions and thoughts, and was a deep reality to him.

For his children's sake it was a pity that this should be the case. It came between him and the influence he might have had over them, had he only striven harder to break the ice and be a little more sympathetic and unreserved. He had a strong sense of duty, and had always desired to help his brother-in-law, should occasion ever arise, as he had never forgotten the assistance that Mr. Templar once gave him in days gone by, when he himself was in great difficulties.

Assistance and help in every way had he received then from him. Kind interest too, and affection as well as money.

Mr. Carlisle was honourable, generous, and just, and he was truly glad now to be able to help Hugh by giving him a home and taking him to be to him as one of his own children.

"You are going to school with my sons," said Mr. Carlisle, after a moment's pause, in which he closely scanned Hugh's countenance and looked into those true brown eyes that were so intently fixed upon himself. "Every

inch a gentleman," was Mr. Carlisle's private verdict upon his nephew's appearance.

"Have you ever been at school before?" he continued.

"Yes, I went to school at Westerton," replied Hugh.

"A large school?"

"Yes, about fifty boys."

"Ah, well, there are many more than that at Elchester House. Now, my boy, I want particularly to know what you are thinking of going in for."

"As a profession, do you mean?" asked Hugh.

"Yes. Most boys have some idea in their heads as to what they want to be; often very foolish ideas," continued Mr. Carlisle. "But that is not what I mean. You look a sensible boy, and I don't think I need fear."

Hugh flushed up at the first words; but before he could reply Mr. Carlisle went on.

"Morris, as you know, is going into the navy; that is to say, if he succeeds in passing his examinations. I very much doubt that he will do so, as he is idle and does not concentrate his energies, such as they are, sufficiently," said Mr. Carlisle, qualifying Morris's talents in a way that was not complimentary

by any means. "Eric is going to be a barrister; and as for Charlie, there is time yet to think of what he will do."

"I wish to be an organist," said Hugh when his uncle ceased speaking.

Had Hugh declared that the desire of his heart was to be a chimney-sweep, Mr. Carlisle could hardly have looked more surprised. Generally he did not consider it dignified to look astonished; but at that moment his feelings got the better of him, and surprise, and I might almost say horror, were depicted on his face.

"A *what*?" he asked, thinking at last that he could not have heard aright.

"An organist," repeated Hugh. "I wish to be an organist."

No, there was no mistake; and Mr. Carlisle exclaimed, in the same wonder-struck tone, "What an extraordinary idea!"

"Do you think so, Uncle Frank?"

"Yes, I do. Pray what did your father think of such a plan?"

"We sometimes spoke of it, but not very often," said Hugh, slowly, thinking of the very few occasions on which he had broached the subject to his father. He was passionately fond of music, but his father had not known *how* fond. Mr. Templar knew that his son played on the

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"when *I* tell you that it is not a proper post for a gentleman to take, I should hope that would convince you—a gentleman, a Templar, a—a—" Mr. Carlisle was actually excited, and stammering a little. "And *my* nephew," he continued, bringing his last and crowning reason to bear upon the subject in question, "an organist! Impossible! Now I will tell you my plan for you. I have interest in Ceylon—friends who hereafter could get an appointment for you out there, and I think you might go out. There is no hurry, of course. You are very young as yet, and your education is very far from being completed; but still you can bear what I say about Ceylon in mind, as that may probably be your destination. I am sure you will like it when you get there. Climate is lovely, and my friend Colonel de la Vaine is sure to interest himself about you."

"Very well, uncle," said Hugh, quietly; "then it is to be Ceylon?"

"Yes, unless you have some other great inclination, for the Church, or law, or—"

"No," said Hugh, shaking his head; "I only wanted to be an organist."

"Now will you be so good as to listen to reason?" said Mr. Carlisle. "Apart from all other considerations, those I stated just now—"

I mean of its being beneath a gentleman to undertake such a post—I should like to know if you think you could gain your livelihood by it ? ”

“ I don’t suppose I could—not at first, and not unless I had proper lessons.”

“ Proper lessons I do not feel inclined to give you ; and you would, as you say, need them before you could do anything for yourself. So no more on *that* subject.”

Mr. Carlisle’s tone was very decided, and Hugh felt that no entreaties or wishes would avail. He was silent, and Mr. Carlisle felt that he must not let him go without a few words of advice.

“ Now you are going to school, Hugh. I hear Eric and Morris are ready. Work hard at your lessons, and try and get into a good set. Keep clear of rows, and always remember that you are a Templar.”

Elchester House was about a mile from the Priory. The boys were day-boarders, and only returned home when afternoon school was over. The building was a large one, and there were a great number of boys, both in the upper and lower schools, for thus it was divided.

Hugh had been well taught at Westerton.

and he got on very fairly at his lessons at Elcheſter Houſe that firſt morning. At recreation time he had an opportunity of making acquaintance with the boys, and he found one or two that he rather liked.

The boys' ſchool I need not deſcribe to you. One large ſchool is much like another, and there was no very remarkable feature about Elcheſter Houſe as far as the boys and the ſchool were concerned.

There is always in every ſchool a ſet of ſtudioſ boys, who learn heartily and ſtudy well from pure love of acquiring knowledge, and becauſe they wiſh to try and make the moſt of their time. To this claſs Eric Carlisle belonged; but Morris unfortunately was with the ſet whoſe unruly ways were a byword, and whoſe delight was to tease their ſchool-fellows, to be up to as much miſchief as was compatible with getting through ſomehow or other a certain amount of work, and avoiding ſcrapes the while if they could. The latter they did not always ſucceed in doing.

Of courſe in the ſchool there was the leaven, ſmall though the amount might be, of good, pure-minded boys amidſt them all—boys that ſcorned a mean ſhift or an ungentlemanly action becauſe it was not in keeping with

the Christian profession which they were trying to walk worthy of; boys who would have died rather than tell a lie, either directly or indirectly, by look, action, or word; who worked behind the master's back as they did before him; who shrunk from an oath, and would be party to no wrong schemes; who, in short, kept before them the Great Example they were trying to copy; trying with all their might and main, aided by the Holy Spirit, even in that difficult school life, which is in itself a little world, beset with dangers and thick with temptations.

It is hard for a boy very often to keep straight and walk firmly in the right way, to remain in all the loneliness of the few who are going therein, rather than follow in the company of the multitude to do evil.

It is hard; yes, but not impossible; and the trial, if they do but come out of it unscathed, by its very severity fits them for that going forth into the outer world of life, where temptations of different kinds will assail them—temptations still aimed at the same virtues, resisted and conquered by the might of the same grace.

The first day was a long one to Hugh, and he was glad when they reached home again and

were assembled at the tea-table. He had run in to see his aunt, and had stayed to have a little talk with her. He was delighted to find that she knew Lady Drayton's son, Mr. Drayton, the clergyman of Westerton. Mrs. Carlisle had met him once at Scarborough, where he had taken his children as they were recovering from measles. Hugh of course was delighted to talk of his old friend to his aunt, and he went up to the schoolroom feeling more cheerful than he had yet done. After tea the boys prepared their lessons for the morrow in the schoolroom, at the large table which was always kept clear for that purpose.

Eric sat quietly, his elbows on the table, his head resting on his hands, and he was so completely wrapped up in his study that he did not hear a word of the conversation.

Ada was teasing Morris by asking him riddles. Morris detested that, she knew very well, as it was not on record that he had ever guessed one in his life. He was mumbling over some Latin to himself. Peggy was speaking German to the Fraulein in the intervals of reading a novel; and Flora was finishing the necktie she had begun the day before.

"Would you rather—" began Ada, in a satisfied tone of voice.

Morris had been near, dangerously near, guessing the last riddle she had asked him ; and now she just remembered a catch that she really thought was a *poser* for him.

"Be quiet, Ada," interrupted Morris ; "I can't get on with my theme if you bother so."

"Well, but do try and guess this, do !"

"What ?" asked Morris, who was really less unwilling than usual to try and guess Ada's riddles. He was rather elated, as he had been so nearly successful with the last a few minutes before.

"Well," said Ada, demurely, "this is not exactly a riddle, it's a *question*."

"Go it, then !" said Morris, impatiently.

"Would you rather be a greater fool than you look, or look a greater fool than you are ?"

Morris thought a moment. Eric looked up amused. He had heard the last part of the conversation. Peggy too was listening.

"Why, look a greater fool than I am, I suppose," said Morris, slowly, having a dim perception that there was a catch somewhere, but not being able to find out where.

Ada nearly rolled off her chair with laughing, Morris had been caught so beautifully. Eric and Peggy laughed heartily too, and Hugh

could hardly keep his countenance. He did not want to laugh, as Morris looked so angry, and the latter was furious when Eric carefully explained the joke to him.

Hugh was privately astounded at seeing a brother and sister quarrel in the way Morris and Ada did ; for whenever the two came together they inevitably began a squabble, and no one seemed inclined to stop them. Eric, for a wonder, interfered this time.

"Go and sit quiet, Ada," said he, at length, rather crossly ; and Ada obeyed.

Hugh then began his Latin exercise, as he had finished learning his lessons.

"Have you seen—" began Morris, presently, looking about the table as he spoke.

"How many times a day do you use those words, Morris?" asked Flora, looking up from her work.

Morris vouchsafed no answer, but repeated his question, only adding this time the name of the object of his search, or rather describing it.

"Have you seen a little brown book? Any one—tell me, please."

"I have not," said Peggy ; "at least, if it is the little book you had last night."

"Yes—that's the one ; I can't find it."

"I don't know what book you mean, I am

sure!" said Flora. "Why can't you say the name. There are half a dozen little brown books of all kinds."

"It's my crib. There is no name on the outside. Help me to find it, Hugh, and I will lend it to you afterwards. Ah! here it is;" and Morris suddenly drew out from behind a pile of books a small brown volume.

"Your *what*?" asked Hugh, only half guessing what Morris meant by his offer.

"My crib, stupid, for the Latin exercises; a key—now do you understand? You may have it first, though, if you like, as I see I have my geography to do yet;" and Morris tossed the book over to Hugh.

"No, thanks," said Hugh, after a moment's pause. "I have never used a key, and I never shall."

"You won't!" asked Morris, surprised. "Pray why not, I should like to know?"

Hugh was so astonished, and disgusted as well, at the cheating that using a key implied, that he could hardly express himself calmly. However bad some of the Westerton boys had been, no cribs, to his knowledge, had been used. The boys there had been put upon their word of honour not to use them, and they were loyal to the trust reposed in them.

"Because it's cheating," said Hugh, bluntly, in answer to his cousin's question.

"You're right there, Hugh," put in Eric, whose sense of justice made him take his cousin's part; "it is cheating."

"You never said so before, Eric," said Morris, whose temper was still very much ruffled.

"No, perhaps not. I never interfere with you, and if you like to cheat it is no concern of mine. No *gentleman*," continued Eric, "would cheat; and Hugh is right."

Hugh, however, kept from the use of cribs from a far higher motive than Eric, whose idea of acting like a gentleman was stronger than that of acting like a Christian.

"Besides the cheating," continued Eric, "I think you are a duffer to do it."

"Why?" asked Morris.

"Why? Why, because you do not learn anything when you use those keys. You might as well not do the exercise as copy it out of the crib, and then hand it in as your own."

"I don't want to learn—I hate Latin!"

"I dare say you do," said Eric, coolly. "You hate everything that is not football and cricket, it seems to me. And as for exercising your

brains—those you have, I mean,” continued Eric, with a slight sneer in his tone—“you never do that unless it is to find out some way of getting out of a scrape. You are clever at that, I will allow.”

“What’s the use of Latin, I’d like to know?” said Morris, stupidly.

“Use!” exclaimed Eric. “You know quite well that you have always said you wanted to go into the navy; and papa has some interest, and may be able to get you a nomination. Pray, where will you be if you are behindhand with your Latin and mathematics?”

“Don’t know.”

“No, nor I either!” retorted Eric. “You may go to a crammer for a few weeks; but if you are as ignorant as you are now, it won’t be of any use your doing that. You’ll be spun to a certainty.”

The boys argued the subject out, and Hugh went on with his lessons, quite unconscious that Morris owed him a grudge for having made the remark he did about the crib.

Eric’s creed was that a gentleman should do nothing mean or cowardly, because he was a gentleman. Morris had the singular notion that, as he happened not to be, as he expressed it, “a cad,” he might do all he liked with impunity.

"Because it's *cheat* how a vein of strong family in answer to his *cheat* them all. Daisy, like her

"You're right *cheat* that the dignity of the name whose sense of just *cheat* be kept up by having every-part; "it is *cheat* suited to people of double or

"You never *cheat*. When Mr. Carlisle comes, Morris, whose *cheat* bills, his wife's "We must, ruffled. *cheat* have a certain position,"

"No, perhaps *cheat* verable argument. How you, and if you like *cheat* expenditure, not going mine. No *cheat* running very close to cheat; and Hugh *cheat* and said no

Hugh, however, from a far higher *cheat* of acting like a *cheat* that of acting like

"Besides the *cheat* think you are a *cheat*

"Why?" asked

"Why? Why anything when might as well *cheat* out of the crib, own."

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"I dare say you hate everything *cheat* it seems to me.

been extremely naughty the day before when spending the afternoon with his mother. So naughty was he that he was told that, as a punishment, he should not have his treat the next day by dining late with his parents, Fing, and Daisy, or having his pudding. Towards evening Mrs. Carlisle relented, and was sorry that she had given the child so severe a punishment, and calling him down to her, she forgave him. Charlie looked sweetly pretty as he was brought to her boudoir. He had been undressed when she sent for him, and he was in his white nightgown, his hair very curly, and his eyes looking large and dark from being so long forgiven, and the next day he was to have his pudding; but when the pudding came, it was white, not plum-pudding—

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It was strange how a vein of strong family pride ran through them all. Daisy, like her mother, thought that the dignity of the name of Carlisle should be kept up by having everything about them suited to people of double or treble their income. When Mr. Carlisle complained of large bills, his wife's "*We must, Frank ; you know we have a certain position,*" etc., seemed an unanswerable argument. However, it was only useless expenditure, not going beyond his means, only running very close to the edge, and so he endured it and said no more.

Peggy's pride took the form of thinking that, because she was a Carlisle, she was infinitely superior to the rest of the people she came across ; and, although she never said so, she considered the Elchester people far beneath them.

This pride was reflected in Ada, and Flora had been carefully inoculated with the family faith in their name. Charlie was a proud child—not of his name, because he was too young to be that, but it came out in another way. On the birthdays of the children they were allowed to dine downstairs, and their favourite pudding was always made for them. Charlie's birthday was in March, and on its last recurrence he had

been extremely naughty the day before when spending the afternoon with his mother. So naughty was he that he was told that, as a punishment, he should not have his treat the next day by dining late with his parents, Eric, and Daisy, or having his pudding. Towards evening Mrs. Carlisle relented, and was sorry that she had given the child so severe a punishment, and calling him down to her, she forgave him. Charlie looked sweetly pretty as he was brought to her boudoir. He had been undressed when she sent for him, and he was in his little white nightgown, his hair very curly, and his grey eyes looking large and dark from long crying. He was forgiven, and the next day he came down to dinner; but when the pudding came—his special favourite, a plum-pudding—Charlie would not touch it. No persuasion could induce him to alter his mind, and he stuck firmly to his refusal. He had not dared to refuse to come down to dinner, but he showed his wounded pride by not touching the pudding.

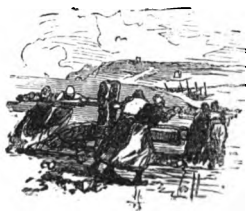
This anecdote, as an illustration of "Charlie's pride," lived in the family annals for many a day.

Flora, who was just considering herself "getting grown up," as Charlie called it, lived a life of perpetual anxiety to avoid doing any-

thing not ladylike. She forgot that a real lady need never strive to be ladylike. A refined mind, and the pure and noble qualities of heart that make a gentlewoman, cannot but result in an outcome of courteous manner and a grace that shines through and outlives contrary winds and adverse circumstances.

The young Carlises could not help seeing that there was something about Hugh different from themselves. They saw that his everyday life was ruled by principles and laws of which (excepting Peggy) they knew nothing.

Eric secretly admired his cousin's courage in going straight along a path, however difficult it might be, once he saw it was a right one. Morris did the same, only the latter was irritated at what he called Hugh's silly scruples about cribs.





CHAPTER IV.

A TALK UNDER THE TREES.

DAYS passed on, and Hugh began to feel quite at home at the Priory. He saw very little of his uncle, and his aunt only when she was well enough.

He had an enemy in Morris, although he was not at all aware of it ; but otherwise he got on very well with his cousins. Peggy and he were great friends. The liking that they had mutually taken to each other had rapidly advanced into friendship ; and the feeling that in his cousin Peggy he had a real friend made up to Hugh for a great deal. He told her all about his Westerton life, his father, and his school days, Lady Drayton, and even about the organ ; and in her he found a very sympathetic and ready listener,

True friendship, which is very rare, is one of the sweetest things in life; and when Hugh left Westerton, feeling that he was going into a strange world, he little thought that in one of his cousins he should find all that he wished for. Though only a year older than he was, she looked more, and Hugh always felt as if she were a dear elder sister. He looked up to her with the chivalrous spirit that a boy often cherishes towards a girl older than himself; and the two friends were certainly very much the happier for knowing each other well.

Friendship—*real* friendship—can only be between those who have the strongest of all foundations to build upon, a common love for their Lord. As an old writer says, "Without Me, friendship hath no strength and no continuance; neither is that love true and pure which is not knit by Me." That once given, it is to be remembered that friends are either a help or a hindrance to each other in spiritual matters. Influence, example, and that wonderful sympathy which is alone learnt of God, must all cement the bond and deepen the holiness of that which shall outlast all time, and go beyond the gates of the grave even into eternity.

Summer was drawing on fast, and warm

weather had quite set in, so that a long-talked-of picnic was arranged to come off on the Saturday, after Mr. Carlisle's return from London, where he had been on business.

Mrs. Carlisle declared that she was not well enough to go, so Mr. Carlisle said he would accompany the party.

There were many preparations for this excursion, and great excitement prevailed among the younger children.

Several of the schoolfellows of the boys, and some of Daisy's friends, were invited. Strangely enough, the Carlisles had never made an excursion of the kind before, all the many summers that they had been at the Priory.

Mr. Carlisle kept very much to himself, and did not care to mix with the Elchester people at all. He had the exclusive spirit which made him rather not know any one than be acquainted with people who were not exactly in his own rank of life.

The quiet lawyers' and officers' families whom he occasionally met on public or social occasions did not attract him very greatly. And they were the only Elchester people he knew beyond the vicar, who was a hard-working man: Mr. Carlisle liked him, and they were

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quite friendly. As for the rest, he thought them beneath him in rank, and could say no more; although, when it came to the point, and if Mr. Carlisle had to define to himself precisely *what* this rank was that he was so proud of, he would have found it rather difficult.

His grandfather was an earl, and he had a great many cousins among the nobility. His wife was the Honourable Mrs. Carlisle, and his own name was a very good one. But any one not knowing that this was all, might have thought, from Mr. Carlisle's manner and exclusiveness, that he was connected at least with royalty.

Mr. Carlisle, as I have already said, was not unobservant; he had noticed that the children wanted a little fresh society; and he began to think that perhaps it was as well that they should know General Hilgate's and Dr. Fayne's children, although they might not have any connection with the peerage.

Strange that any sensible man, and above all a Christian, should hold earthly rank at such a high value! But so it was. The fact remained; and Mr. Carlisle was blissfully unconscious that his dread of knowing people whom he considered beneath him, and his delight in



THE COUSINS AT THE PICNIC.

the contemplation of his own good family and connections, were feelings that others might have thought indicative of utter snobbishness rather than marks of blue blood.

However, the picnic party, to return to that, went off very well. Peggy after lunch found Hugh sitting under a great tree and looking rather dismal. All the rest had gone off to see some old ruin about a mile distant. Peggy, feeling tired, had remained behind, and was glad, when she went into the field where they had had lunch, to find Hugh there.

Peggy sat down in the shade. Hugh roused himself a little from his depression, and was evidently in the humour for a long talk.

"Where's the Fraulein to-day?" he began by asking. "I mean, why did she not come with us?"

"Oh, she is staying with mamma; and, besides that, she never comes anywhere with us."

"But you have never been to a picnic before?"

"No; but when we have friends sometimes spending the evening, as we do when mamma is better, she never comes down; and, as I say, she never accompanies us in our own little private picnics, for we have those sometimes."

"It must be rather dull for her," said Hugh.

Peggy smiled. "I never thought about it, Hugh, really. She is the *governess*, you know," she added, in a tone that sounded as if that word explained everything.

"Well," said Hugh, "is that any reason why she should not come out of the schoolroom sometimes?"

"I don't know—yes I do, though," said Peggy, slowly. "I suppose papa never asks her, as she is only a governess. I see you don't understand, Hugh. And that reminds me. I have often wanted to ask you why it is that you are so civil to the Fraulein. Do you know we are all so amused at it? We could not get over it at first, but now we are accustomed to it—still I want to know the reason."

"Amused at what?" asked Hugh, mystified exceedingly. He and Peggy had never before touched upon this subject.

"Well, you never seemed to see that she was just the governess, that was all, and you treat her just as if she was one of us, or any other lady."

"Is she not a lady?" asked Hugh.

"I do not know," said Peggy, mysteriously. "I rather fancy not. I have some idea that

she is only one of the *bourgeois* class, and that it is only her education that has made her what she is."

"I don't understand—I really don't," said Hugh, plainly, "what on earth you mean. If Uncle Frank and Aunt Edith think her fit to be with you girls and to teach you, they must think that in their house she should be treated like a lady."

"Oh, of course she is well treated," said Peggy; "but—"

"I think I understand now. Oh, Peggy, I am sorry—sorry you should think so and have such ideas! Father used to tell me that a Christian man should always be courteous to every one, especially to *women*. He said it was our bounden duty; and I suppose one girl ought to be so to another woman," said Hugh, not very lucidly; but Peggy gathered his meaning.

"I did not look upon it from that point of view," she said, in a low voice.

"A Christian point, do you mean?"

"Yes. Oh, Hugh, I wish I were more like you!"

"Like me! Peggy, don't," said Hugh, who had been having an introspective fit before Peggy came, and had been lamenting to him-

self that he had gone back instead of advancing since he had left Westerton, so that Peggy's words took him by surprise and almost pained him. For Hugh's chief grace was humility; and had any one told him he could influence others strongly for good he would have been astounded.

"Yes, I must," said Peggy, vehemently; for she seemed to have had light come to her that very minute, showing her the reason of many things. "I do wish I was more like you. Before you came I often felt so lonely, having no one to talk to about the things that I was just beginning to care for, and—"

"Couldn't you talk to Uncle Frank?" interrupted Hugh; "he would understand, would he not?"

"Perhaps," said Peggy, doubtfully. "But, Hugh, I never could summon up courage to talk to papa. I know he is very good; but he is so reserved, and I often wonder if he really cares much about us. Of course we all know that Daisy is his favourite; but the rest of us—"

"I am sure he does," said Hugh, "quite sure."

"Well—about talking to him; I cannot,

Hugh, dear ; it is no use thinking of it. One evening in that gloomy study of his I began about something, and he answered me so shortly. I was telling him—trying to tell him—that things were somehow lately changed with me, that all was different ; that I really had seen my need of a Saviour, and had asked Him to forgive me. Not in those very words, you know, Hugh, but something like them ; and he answered so little that I really wondered if he heard at all.”

“ Perhaps it will be better some day. When Daisy goes to stay with her friends in Brussels, you may see more of him, and that will be the time,” said Hugh.

Peggy did not know—how should she ?—that her father had spent many an hour in “ that gloomy study ” with closed door, in earnest prayer for his children. One by one he had prayed for them, asking God to bless them and to lead them to a knowledge of Himself ; and when Peggy had spoken as she had done that night his coldness was indeed only apparent. Far from being uninterested, he was too deeply moved to be able to put into words the feelings that stirred within him. He was very glad, and a great thanksgiving rose from his heart at the moment.

"Then when you came, Hugh," said Peggy, "I found we agreed; and yet you are so different in many ways from what I am. As I said just now, I wish I was like you. You have some secret, Hugh—you must have."

"Some secret, Peggy—what do you mean?"

"Yes, you have some secret. I don't mean that you are really trying to follow our blessed Lord; it's not that, and yet it is something like it. I can't explain it very well. I have known good people, Hugh, but very few of them were like you. You never seem to forget all the little things that one ought to mind, I suppose. You behave so differently to the Fraulein from me. Now I never trouble about her at all; but I notice you always ask after her neuralgia, and seem to care about that brother of hers, Gustav, who she thinks is going to be a great painter some day. Then it seemed to come quite natural to you to carry that old woman's basket for her the other day."

"I don't remember—when was it?"

"Oh! one day last week. I remember quite well. We were going up Elchester Hill, you and I and Charlie, and an old woman passed with a basket. She was very tired, and nearly dropped. She would have dropped down, I

do think, if you had not run forward and carried it up the hill for her."

"I could not help it," said Hugh. "Why, the poor old thing could hardly stagger up the hill with it!"

"That's just what I mean—you *can't help it*. You have some secret, Hugh, that makes you do these things—oh! and many more! When Morris is so horrid sometimes, teasing and worrying, I can see that you find it hard to keep your temper, and you nearly always do, and you are every bit as kind to him as you are to the others. Then when he and Ada begin one of their quarrels, you always try and make peace, and—"

"Don't go on, please, Peggy! I had rather you did not. You only see the outside, you know, and you can't guess how bad I really am; if you did you would never think of wanting to be like me," said Hugh.

Large-hearted souls, who generally are humble as well, are rarely spoilt by commendation and praise. It is rather a subject for the greater exercise of humility, for they, knowing themselves, as by the light of God's Holy Spirit they are able to do, far from being unduly exalted by the praise that they hear, are only conscious

of how far they really fall short of meriting it, and how they should strive to be what they seem. Small-minded people, on the contrary, only get harm by much praise—it is but the fuel which increases the flame of their self-satisfaction and consequent conceit.

“But the secret, Hugh—you have one, I am sure?” said Peggy, persistently.

“It is no secret, Peggy. If I do try and keep from getting into an awful wax whenever I am tempted to, and if I do remember the different things we are told in the Bible to be—courteous and forgiving, and all that—not that I *am*, Peggy, as you think, for I often remember and don’t act a bit as if I did—but I do try to keep in mind that, if we love Christ, we are bound, we are *obliged*, to try and keep His words and do His commandments.”

“I understand,” said Peggy; “you feel bound to try and please Him; because you love Him.”

Hugh nodded; and both sat silent for a few minutes.

But the merry voices of the party returning from the ruin broke in upon the silence. Peggy hastily rose. “We must go to our companions,” she said; “but I shall not forget.

Oh, Hugh! it is a secret after all; I wonder whether I shall ever find it out!"

The subject was not resumed between the cousins afterwards; but Peggy was of a thoughtful disposition, and turned the matter over and over again in her own mind. She understood Hugh's secret now. He not only believed in Christ as his Saviour, but he endeavoured, however feebly, to follow His example; and that was done by studying His Holy Word, finding therein the laws of His kingdom, and bringing them to bear upon the small details of every-day life—its common duties and most trivial actions.





CHAPTER V.

THE TOPAZ SEAL.

THE morning post generally came in about the time of the schoolroom breakfast; and a few days after the picnic, the letters being brought in as usual, Hugh was delighted to see that he had one from Lady Drayton. Her health being so bad that she was rarely able to write, her letters were worth a great deal to Hugh when he did get them. He sat that morning, forgetting his breakfast and everything else, absorbed in Lady Drayton's letter.

It was full of news that interested him about all the Westerton people, and then Lady Drayton had written a little about that concerning which she was so anxious, Hugh's welfare,

spiritual and temporal. She knew that boys rarely liked long sermons addressed to them either by word or letter, so she did not give him pages of good advice or much in the way of preaching. She simply reminded him of his father and his father's life. She recalled the talks they had had sometimes at the Parsonage, and she asked Hugh if the motto had been of any help to him, and if he understood it any better.

When Hugh answered that letter he was able to say what really gladdened the heart of his old friend, namely, that the two words had indeed often come to his mind, and that they had helped him; that he was really beginning to see some of the great lessons they taught, and trying as hard as he could—God helping him—to catch some of their spirit.

But at the breakfast table that morning there was another person absorbed in what the post had brought.

Marie Valheim was so much occupied with one letter that she had received that her breakfast remained untouched. It was a good thing that it was holiday time, and that she could read her letter at once, for usually she was obliged to lay it aside and wait until after breakfast, often until after lessons.

But in holiday time there was no need to hurry over breakfast, and those who had a mind to do so could read their letters at once.

Peggy had none that morning, and as she had finished her breakfast she had leisure to look at the Fraulein as the latter read her letter, which was written in a pointed, flourishing German hand on thin paper, leaving a very wide margin at one side.

Peggy thought of how very often she had seen Fraulein Valheim reading letters of the kind, and that, after she had done so, she had been often very sad and depressed ; and Peggy's heart smote her now when she remembered that no one ever asked her if she had had bad news, no one ever inquired after her invalid father, or how Gustav, her pride and joy, was getting on. No one but Hugh. He always did ; and Peggy began to think she, too, could take an interest in the lonely little governess, who was away among strangers, and who must, Peggy began to think, pine a little for a sight of the *Vaterland*.

This morning the Fraulein's pale face was lighted up with joy as she read her letter. There was evidently good news in it, and the tears that Peggy could see glistening through

the spectacles in the pale-blue eyes were surely only tears of joy.

At last the letter was finished, and the Fraulein put it carefully back in the envelope, and then left it near her on the table, giving it a glance now and then, as she finished her bread-and-butter and drank her untouched coffee.

"You have had good news, I hope?" said Peggy, in German.

The Fraulein looked up astounded. Her eyes were cast down upon her dear letter, and her thoughts far away at Elberfeld with the only people she thought cared about her, and the sudden question startled her.

Never had one of the Carlises inquired about the many griefs and the few joys, the harassing accounts of her father's health, and Gustav's uphill road to fame, that those thin blue pages told her of week after week. She felt it terribly at first, her own loneliness and the indifference of those around her to the "stranger within their gates." She was getting used to it, until Hugh broke the ice by taking a real interest in her home, and caring to hear of what was of so much importance to her. But, wonder of wonders! here was Peggy ask-

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ing if she had had good news ! She was a good, forgiving little soul, with not a spark of meanness about her ; and if for a moment she felt inclined to return a short answer, it soon passed away. Joy, especially if you are unaccustomed to it, makes you see all the world through rose-tinted glasses for the moment, and the little Fraulein's mental spectacles were of that hue just then.

She told Peggy that she had indeed had good news. Gustav had met a celebrated artist from Vienna, who had seen his paintings, and bid him have much hope for the future. He had sold three of Gustav's Rhine pictures for him, and said he was sure of a purchaser for the large one of Ehrenbreitstein. He thought very highly of it himself ; and, in short, Gustav had come to that happy state in which an artist, whether of brush, pen, or sound, finds that his toil has not been in vain, and that there is that in him worth it all—talent, in however small or great degree that may be.

He may have thought it himself, but to have it recognised by a master hand is to set the seal of assurance on what was before only a hope.

Now that the Fraulein Valheim was on the

subject, she talked away eagerly to Peggy, who began to be much interested in Gustav's story. They were conversing still when the door of the schoolroom opened, and Daisy entered. She was much surprised at seeing the governess's earnest face flushed with the pleasure she felt about her brother, her spectacles pushed up, as they generally were when she was excited, and the thin blue letter lying open on the table. Then to see that Peggy was taking an interest in what could only have been the Fraulein's concerns surprised Daisy still more.

What was Peggy thinking about, being so familiar with the governess?

Daisy said nothing, but she was surprised, and not a little vexed. What would she have said if she had known that Hugh's words under the trees, and his whole life, had such influence on Peggy that she had resolved to try and have the "heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and sympathise," and that she reproached herself very much for her carelessness in the past?

But Daisy did not stay long to meditate on the change of affairs; she had news of her own to communicate.

"What do you think, Peggy? I have had a letter from the Gräfin Helvein, and she wishes me to go to her next week, instead of waiting until the autumn, to pay the visit I have so long promised her."

"And are you going?" asked Peggy.

"Oh yes, I am going. Papa says I may; and he is actually going to take me there himself. Is it not a charming plan?"

"Delightful," said Peggy. "What a lot you will have to do!"

The girls then went up to Daisy's room, to look over her clothes with her maid, and make arrangements for the journey; and the next week she and Mr. Carlisle left for Brussels.

All went on much as usual when they were gone; and, the holidays being ended, school-days began again. Hugh's great regret was that he should have less time for music, for, bereft of his beloved organ, he had been obliged to content himself with a small harmonium that there was in the schoolroom, and on that he played whenever he had the leisure. Indeed, it was a great temptation to him to spend time over it that ought to have been given to other things, but he tried to be brave, and not yield to it.

Hugh, though by no means a clever boy, had sufficient energy and perseverance to carry him through his school work well. To his own surprise, he had gained two prizes at the midsummer examination. Eric had come off with a great many, and Morris with not one. He made a faint effort to gain the Latin prize, but utterly failed. His knowledge, gained through the use of cribs, was so perfectly superficial that it could never stand him in good stead. Now Hugh had come off very well in his Latin, and had gained a prize—in a higher class than Morris, of course, as he was older and more advanced in every way.

Morris had not yet got over his vexation about Hugh and the prize; and it stirred up the remembrance of the first days that Hugh had been at the Priory, when the conversation about keys to lesson books took place. Whatever his private opinion on the subject may have been, Morris did not like to hear what he did called cheating; and it now occurred to him that he had never really paid Hugh out, as he had at first intended to do. He disliked his cousin very much, and showed it in various little ways. But now he wanted to “serve him out,” as he called it. What should he do?

At first he thought of putting the crib in Hugh's desk, and letting the masters think that his cousin used it. Then he thought that would never do. The chances were that the master would see it, and if he did Hugh's word would be believed, if he disclaimed being the owner. He then went up into Hugh's room, and looked about it to see if there was anything that he could hide.

Hugh had tidy habits, and his room was in order, only as Morris looked about he caught sight of a large topaz seal on the dressing-table. Hugh generally carried it in his waistcoat pocket. He had come to value the seal very much, and he rarely went without it; only that afternoon he had been very wet coming home from school, and had to change his clothes. In doing so he forgot the seal, and left it on the dressing-table.

"I dare say it is something he is fond of," said Morris to himself, as he looked at the seal. "He is so particular about his things. I remember how waxy he was one day when I asked him why he used such an old prayer-book, and the way he looked when he said, 'It belonged to my father.' He would not have given himself greater airs, I think, if it



MORRIS AT HUGH'S DRESSING-TABLE.

had belonged to the Queen." So thinking, Morris calmly pocketed the seal, and then, putting it by in his own collar-box, he thought no more about it.

The days passed on. Hugh looked for his seal, and could not find it. He asked Peggy if she had seen it, and she helped him to look for it. He asked the others, but they all denied that they had seen it. Morris shook his head, and the rest said, "No." Hugh could not make out what had become of it. He spent two half-holidays turning out his room himself. The under housemaid, who had charge of the boys' rooms, assured him that she had looked everywhere in his room for it; and as all the servants of the house, from the butler down to the kitchen-maid, were faithful, and had been in the family for years, Hugh could not suspect them of having stolen it. But he was very persevering, and as he distinctly recollected having left it in his room, he spared no pains to search in every hole and corner.

When Lady Drayton had first given him the seal he had not cared much for it, but now he did, and he regretted its loss very much. It was one of the few presents she had ever

made to him, and he liked to think of all she had told him about the motto when he looked at it. However, now the seal was gone, and it could not be found.

Mr. Carlisle came back from Brussels at the end of July; and finding that his wife was not at all well he sent her with the Fraulein to a seaside place, and remained at home himself. There was also some painting to be done; and as she disliked the smell of paint, it was as well that she should be away during that time.

Mrs. Carlisle herself looked forward with much pleasure to going to Eastbourne, especially as she heard that a doctor of hydropathic views, whom she had long wished to see, was likely to be there. The thought that he might throw some light on a knotty point she had found in a work "on the cold-water cure," and that he might suggest something new in the way of "packs," supported her on her journey, and she accomplished it with half the fatigue that she had anticipated.

The afternoon post had just come in one August day, and Hugh sat in the garden reading a long letter from Lady Drayton. The garden was very shady and pleasant, and Hugh found it delightful to be stretched full

length on the grass under the shade of a large copper beech that stood on the lawn at the back of the house.

Mr. Carlisle's study window was quite near this, and from it you could step on to the grass.

Mr. Carlisle was then busy, looking over some workmen's accounts, and so Hugh had the garden all to himself.

It was a half-holiday, but the heat was too great for cricket, and so Hugh remained in the garden. Eric and the girls were in the school-room.

As he lay there before the post came, watching the long shadows across the grass, hearing the murmur of the honey-laden bees and the songs of the birds in the trees, he thought over his old longing to be an organist. He knew that he could never devote himself to the study of the organ—never make it a profession, as he had once hoped to do ; but he thought that if he were rich and independent he would have time to spend on it and money to get lessons. He was neither, however, and he must make the best of the matter. If he went to Ceylon he might have to work hard for years before he would have much money ; for now that it came

to the point, when Colonel de la Vaine had been asked about an appointment for Hugh, he could not help him to any but those in which there was plenty of work and uncommonly little pay.

But, as Mr. Carlisle had said, it was not for the present; perhaps something would turn up later. So Hugh hoped, and waited, and sometimes dreamed. For, although music was pretty well shut out from Hugh's life at that time, the love of it could not be quenched.

All the beauty that he saw in the lovely summer time and in the world around him Hugh longed to be putting into music. But he must bend to circumstances, and his longings could go no further. He had to console himself with the harmonium, which, especially as it was not a very good one, was nothing to an organ, but at all events better than the piano.

Then, after indulging in a little "longing fit," as he lay on the cool grass, Hugh had Lady Drayton's letter brought to him.

In it she told him that her son, Mr. Drayton, who was the clergyman at Westerton, had had very severe trouble lately. His eldest son had met with a serious accident that crippled him

for life, and he himself had lost a great portion of his income by the failure of a bank, only the small sum from his living remaining to him.

It was a great trial to come suddenly from wealth to comparative poverty. For before this Mr. Drayton was a rich man, and he had taken the small living of Westerton only from love of the work and the people. He had had large private means, and so was well able to provide for his family. Hugh was very sorry to hear this bad news of his friend. He was just putting the letter in his pocket when a voice at his side sent his thoughts into quite another direction.

"Hugh, I've found your seal." It was Charlie who spoke, and he handed Hugh the topaz seal that Hugh had been looking for so long. He sprang to his feet with delight, and was holding the seal in his hand, looking at it delightedly, when Morris and Eric came into the garden. Hugh, however, did not perceive them, he was so delighted to find his seal again.

"I'm awfully glad I found it, Hugh," said Charlie, who was very fond of his cousin.

"Where did you find it, Charlie? Oh, I am glad to have it."

"I found it in 'Have-you-seen's' collar-box," said Charlie. "I wanted a clean collar, as I am going to the Hilgates' to tea, and nurse said I might look in Morris's collar-box; she thought she must have put some of mine in there by mistake, as she could not find them in my drawer."

"And you found the seal there!" exclaimed Hugh, in his clear young voice, which, from excitement, rose higher than usual—so high that Mr. Carlisle paused in his accounts and heard all that passed.

"Yes," said Charlie, "I did."

"What's the row?" asked Morris, coming up to Hugh and Charlie, Eric sauntering up leisurely behind.

All the anger died out of Hugh's voice as he turned and looked at Morris. He could not be angry with him for playing him a *trick* when he had committed such a *sin* in telling lies about it.

"Oh, Morris!"

"Well? What's up?" asked Morris, who had forgotten all about the seal.

"My seal—Charlie found it in your collar-box," said Hugh, slowly.

"How dare you go poking in my things,

you young worry ? ” asked Morris, wrathfully, glad to find some one to vent his anger upon.

“ Nurse sent me to look for— ” began Charlie ; but Hugh interrupted him.

“ Morris, you told me a lie about it—yes, you did ! You must remember perfectly my asking you if you had seen my seal.”

“ When you asked me, I did not say anything ; you can’t say that I did,” said Morris.

“ Say ! You heard me quite well, and you shook your head. You looked at me as you did it, and— ”

“ Well, don’t get into a wax, old boy ; it doesn’t become you. You’re getting as red as a turkey-cock.”

But Hugh paid no attention ; he had suddenly remembered something that Morris had forgotten.

“ I remember you— Yes, I *did* ask you again if you had seen my seal. It was a week ago, when Hilgate wanted some seals for his collection, and I told him I wished I had found mine to give him an impression of it. You were there, and I asked you again if you had seen it, as I knew you had been turning out some of the things in the cupboard, and— ”

“ Make the story a little longer, do ! Just a

little more, there's a dear!" said Morris. "Can't you say how I looked, and how you looked, and how Hilgate looked, and where we stood, and what was the particular hour—no, minute—it was when you asked me?"

"I asked you then, and you *said* 'No,'" was all Hugh's reply to the sneering words.

"Have-you-seen, you are a cad!" said Eric, loftily. Not if he had died for it would Eric have told a lie about anything, the most trifling or grave matter.

"Pray what is the cause of this scene?" said Mr. Carlisle, who had been standing in his study window, but unobserved by the excited group.

Hugh said nothing. He was above being a tell-tale, and the boys knew that. Mr. Carlisle now stepped down to the lawn. Eric and Charlie gave an account of the matter, and Morris put in a few interruptions in the way of excuses.

"Such an ungentlemanly thing to do!" said Eric, as he finished the story.

"I didn't think fibs mattered, only in cads," whimpered Morris, who read his father's countenance rightly, and saw that he was very angry with him.

"A fib!" thundered Mr. Carlisle, looking

some inches taller than usual, his eyes flashing, his face pale with not only anger, but terrible disappointment and sorrow at finding that one of his children could so speak. "There is no such thing as a fib! A lie is a lie all the world over, and you told your cousin two lies. Yes, *two*, sir—you need not interrupt me! You *acted* a lie when you shook your head in answer to his question, and you *told* a lie in words when you said 'No' the second time. What have you to say for yourself?"

Morris hung his head.

"Nothing. Ah, well, you shall have your punishment. For the next two months you stay in during the half-holidays, and learn for me some of Gibbon. I will appoint you the quantity. Perhaps that will impress the fact upon your memory. Now *go!*" said Mr. Carlisle, as Morris was now in full roar.

The latter went off, nothing loth, and Eric, Hugh, and Charlie went into the house.





CHAPTER VI.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

MR. CARLISLE that evening shut himself up in his study. He did not look over the accounts that he had been occupied with in the afternoon. He did not answer a pile of letters that lay on the table; he did not touch the new number of his favourite magazine; and his coffee, which was always brought into the study, was untasted. He lay back in his arm-chair looking out on the view that he could see from the open French window. But though he looked on the smooth green grass, on the copper beech, through the branches of which the last rays of the setting sun were pouring, gilding the leaves, and throwing quaint shadows on the

lawn, on the large magnolia-tree, with its glistening leaves and large white flowers against the wall—as he looked on all, at the peaceful scene, and the sky that was aglow with the strong glory of the setting August sun, yet he did not seem to be seeing anything. His thoughts were very busy.

Sometimes we live on in a kind of dream-life, taking things as they come, not allowing ourselves to be seriously disquieted at what happens, being content with the surface under our notice, and not having energy enough to dig beneath it and see what the real soil is, whether of unfruitful dust or mines of hidden wealth. Then something happens suddenly that impels us to wake up and be stirring, to be dreaming no longer, but actively watching, searching, on the alert. And it was just something of the kind that happened that day to Mr. Carlisle.

As an earnest Christian man he could not but be very anxious about the souls of his children. He did care about them, he did long to know if they had given themselves to their Saviour ; and yet his natural coldness and reserve prevented him from talking much to them on the subject that was dearest to him.

That day a veil had been, as it were, torn away from his eyes with respect to two of his children. Eric, he could see plainly, was building upon a very wrong foundation, making a creed of bare morals, and all that he imagined should be implied by the name gentleman, making the latter word the standard for his actions; and Mr. Carlisle, with a sigh, thought how vain a help that was, and would be, to the boy—how unstable a support to him through life!

And Morris. Morris was a tease and a troublesome boy, but his father was very fond of him. He was high-spirited and full of fun, and, such being the case, he was liable to get into many scrapes. That was all. His father thought that there was at least nothing radically wrong about the boy, and once or twice he fancied that he had shown signs of caring for good things.

Once, Mr. Carlisle could remember, during a sermon upon the beauty of the life spent for God, that Morris had not, for a wonder, fidgeted, but had looked earnestly and attentively at the preacher, as if he had really a wistful longing to know something of what he was hearing. It was a plain, practical sermon, and Mr. Car-

lisle remembered it well. It showed how religion could be brought into the home, the school and the playground, the workshop, into every station or calling of life; and Mr. Carlisle, as the words came back to his mind, remembered the tone of the speaker's voice and the look on Morris's face.

Well, it was very dreadful to think that Morris was a liar. For Mr. Carlisle called a spade a spade, and he saw that the lies Morris had acted and spoken to his cousin were but the outcome of wrong principles.

He was deeply grieved—more so than any one could have any idea of. His wife might not have been able to understand him; but had she been at home she would have sympathised. Mrs. Carlisle knew very little of her children; her ill-health made her quite an invalid, and she lacked the strength of will and purpose necessary to influence them in the right way. With health of body, she was now at Eastbourne gaining vigour of another kind, and learning many lessons in that bright September weather that she had never known before. She met an old friend there who was of great help to her. From her she was learning of the important part an invalid mother may take in her household,

and the lessons of peace and love were never forgotten. They were brought back to the Priory, and changed the aspect of many things.

In saying this, I have forestalled a little ; but I have only done so as I seem to have left Mrs. Carlisle so completely out of my story.

The truth was, she had been selfish and self-absorbed, and her influence had been limited, her position in her home very unimportant.

To return to her husband.

The evening shadows drooped over the land ; the trees were no longer gold-tinged by the setting sun ; a slight breeze was stirring the leaves, making a cool murmuring sound ; the birds had all gone to sleep, and the flowers were closed for the night ; the sky was uniformly blue, of that strange colour over which there was a faint, very faint rose tinge yet remaining, making it of that curious purple shade you often see after a hot day.

Mr. Carlisle was sitting in the same place, his thoughts busy still on the same subject.

Certainly he had not done much to win the love of his children. He felt most acutely then how great a stranger he was to them ; and, like most proud natures who suffer very severely,

he saw that night that his children were turning out very differently from what he had expected.

Whose fault was it? Conscience spoke pretty loudly in that quiet evening time, and Mr. Carlisle braced his soul to the task, and listened. It was his own fault. His undue reserve had raised up a barrier between himself and his children, and he had not been what he might to them.

He was too proud. Ah! here lay the secret of much of the mischief. He expected the love to come unsought; he kept back until he saw his children make the first advance. But, as if to train him gently, and cure him of that deadly pride, his Heavenly Father had willed that his children, Daisy excepted, should keep aloof from him—placed him so that now, if he would win them, he must be the first to come forward.

Not having their strong affection, he could not hope to do much towards influencing them in religious matters.

They had a kind of fondness for him, and they would have been very sorry had he been ill or troubled, but he was not the father to them. They never ran to him with their

childish griefs; they would rather go to their mother, even at the risk of being sent away as troublesome. They never came to him in their school difficulties, or asked his advice about the hundred and one things that growing boys and girls like to talk over. It simply never occurred to them to do it.

He was thinking over all these things, pondering them over in his mind, resolving, come what may, that he would be different in the future, when, in answer to his "Come in," Hugh entered.

"Uncle Frank, I want to ask a favour," said Hugh, going at once to the point.

"What is it, Hugh?" asked Mr. Carlisle, in a tone of voice that Hugh had never heard from him before, there was so much sorrow in it.

"Will you forgive Morris? Don't punish him," said Hugh.

Mr. Carlisle paused before answering.

"Was it not your seal he took and hid?"

"Yes, Uncle Frank."

"And the—the lies!" said Mr. Carlisle, sternly.

"Yes; but do forgive him, Uncle Frank!" pleaded Hugh.

The boy had felt very keenly being the cause of Morris's punishment, and he felt he must plead for him. As for the lies, Hugh knew that Morris had no regard for truth; and he thought that this forgiveness, if he could but obtain it for him, might be a fresh incentive to something better than the life he was now leading.

Mr. Carlisle had very stern notions about offenders receiving their just punishment; but just then he was softened, and he granted Hugh's request, to the surprise of the latter, who had hardly hoped to be successful. "And," added Mr. Carlisle, "I will go and tell him so myself. Is he in bed?"

"Yes, Uncle Frank," said Hugh, joyfully; "but do go, I dare say he is not asleep; and oh, I am so much obliged to you!"

Mr. Carlisle did go.

The room was not yet darkened for the night, and Mr. Carlisle in the twilight made his way to the bed. Morris had a room to himself, and his bed was in the farthest corner of it.

A boy is still very childish at eleven, and Morris was quite a child.

He was fretting very much over his mis-

conduct, and when Mr. Carlisle entered he was crying bitterly.

"Morris!"

No answer. A heavy sob was the only sound that broke the stillness.

Mr. Carlisle came nearer.

"Morris—are you awake?"

"Yes."

"I have come to tell you that your cousin has pleaded for you, and that I have said I would forgive you."

"Not take away my holidays?"

"No."

"I'm awfully glad! it's really good of Hugh!" said the boy, seeing in the sunshine caused by his lost holidays being restored to him his cousin's virtues more distinctly than ever.

"Now," said Mr. Carlisle, "I want to know how and why you touched his seal at all."

"I took it because I wanted to hide it."

"Why did you want to hide it?"

"Because—because—oh, papa, I can't tell you!"

"Is it a secret, then?"

"No."

"Then tell me," said Mr. Carlisle; and there was that in the words that his son felt to be irresistible.

"I wanted to pay him out. When he first came he said I cheated."

"About what? Cheating!" Mr. Carlisle groaned inwardly; here was more proof of a wrong state of things.

"Yes, I used cribs, and he wouldn't; and I said it was all right, and he said it was cheating; and I wanted to pay him out for that."

Mr. Carlisle felt then that this was no time for reproving the boy for wrong actions. He saw now that he must go deeper, and strike at the root of the matter if he would help his son at all.

"Morris, you and your cousin are very different," said Mr. Carlisle, slowly.

"Yes, I know," said Morris, turning over on his other side, so as not to meet his father's look. For even in the twilight he could see that his father was scanning his face closely. "Hugh is a clever fellow in some things, and always manages to keep clear of scrapes."

"I do not mean that," said Mr. Carlisle.

"I have watched your cousin, and I believe that what makes him different is that he is trying very hard to follow the example of his Saviour." Mr. Carlisle spoke the words with difficulty.

"I don't know—there's something about the fellow that always makes him—I don't know how to explain it. He won't use cribs, and yet he's sometimes an awfully long time doing his lessons," said Morris, who, having dried his tears, was disposed to be communicative; "and he never fights, though he isn't a coward; for the other day when you were away, papa, he jumped into the river to save Nelson, one of the little fellows, who was almost done for. He'd got the cramp, and was sinking."

"I never heard of this," said Mr. Carlisle.

"No; we forgot to tell you. But Hugh took it all as a matter of course, and seemed so surprised when the master praised him. He said he was bound to do it—that it was right—and—"

"Morris, you don't know how I wish my son had the same principles to guide him that Hugh has," interrupted Mr. Carlisle.

"I can never be goody," said Morris, plainly.

"Not *goody*, but *good*. There's a vast difference between the two. Now you cannot say that your cousin is not a manly fellow."

"Yes, he is, though he's a duffer about some things," said Morris.

"Well, do not let us talk of him any more. I want to speak to you, Morris; you have pained me very much to-day."

Pained his father! Morris was so fairly surprised that he half rose and sat up in bed.

"Yes, you did. I was pained to find that my boy was growing up without any principles to guide him, without any horror of sin."

Morris did not answer. He thought he had been let off wonderfully easily. Now, he thought, the lecture was coming. But he was mistaken. Mr. Carlisle was not going to lecture him at all.

"My boy, perhaps it has been my fault. Indeed, I am sure that it is my fault. I should have talked to you more of that Saviour I wish you all had as your Friend. I ought to have told you oftener than I have done how willing He is to forgive all who come to Him by faith, and how grand a thing it is, once

forgiven, to try and live for Him. How, though His service is perfect freedom, we are bound by laws that regulate every action of our lives to do His will, to obey His commandments."

"Peggy talks like that sometimes," said Morris.

"It has been my fault," said Mr. Carlisle, who did not spare his self-accusations, and who even magnified his own shortcomings. "Morris, shall it be different for the future? Shall we speak a little about those things that I wish you knew more of, and that would make you a different boy?"

Morris did not answer, and in the quiet twilight Mr. Carlisle bent his stately head and kissed his little son.

There was something—the better nature of the boy—that seemed touched by this; and, rising, he threw his arms round his father's neck and laid his head on his shoulder.

Not a word was said on either side, but Morris never forgot that night and his father's kiss.

Surely there was something sacred in that kiss of his father. It was the outward sign of great sorrow for the past, of humility

that had so lately come to him, of earnest, determinate resolve that the future should be different.

Morris did not know, did not understand, but he felt it; and there was a bond formed that night which no length of years ever sundered.





CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

I MIGHT have said good-bye to Hugh Templar in my last chapter. Things were very different with him from the day when I showed him first to you, a lovely boy leaving his dear old home and going out amongst strangers.

He was now quite at home at the Priory. He had a dear friend in Peggy, Eric was beginning to care for him, and all the rest liked him.

Morris had been obliged to follow the lead, for Hugh's kindness and forgiving spirit had done wonders.

All the household were one by one recognising that Hugh was influencing them, and they

were compelled to see the simple goodness of a life led in following Him who, as old Dekker so quaintly puts it, was

“A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.”

They saw that the principle at work was one far higher than that of being noble and honest, brave and true, simply because there was the honour of an old name or the badge of a class to maintain. They could not but see that it was the *noblesse oblige* of one of the King's children.

Hugh never knew why it was, that it was in reality very much owing to him, that Eric changed in many ways, that Flora became less frivolous and silly, that Morris and Ada were more amicable and quarrelled less frequently. Later on all the Carlises came to be faithful children of their Heavenly Father, not only in name.

Fraulein Valheim came back, after a short Christmas visit to Elberfeld, bright and happy. Her father was better, her brother progressing very well in his profession, and as for herself, she too found a change in the Priory. The gentle courtesy that recognised her position in the household, as a member of it worthy of

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respect and consideration, made her much happier. She turned more eagerly to Hugh and Peggy than to any of the others, but still they all became very dear to her. But these two were her first friends. Then when Charlie was very ill once she helped so faithfully to nurse him, that afterwards she found herself really the friend of the family, one and all. The change this made in her life was very great.

Mr. Carlisle was much oftener with his children than he had been. That little episode of Morris and the seal had worked a marvellous alteration in him. He learnt that pride must come down with the workings of grace, that it must be laid low, however sharp was the lesson that laid it low. He cared now far less than before about his ancient family and his pedigree. He estimated them at their right value, and was not unduly exalted at possessing them ; and he recognised the truth that the prop of family pride is but an uncertain one ; that the principles that flow out of it cannot be substituted for a living faith in God, and the pride, or rather dignity, that impels His children to shrink from all that is unworthy of their calling.

He was much less reserved, and the difficulty he had in breaking the ice had proved to be worth the trouble. It gained him the love of his children, and by that step led them on to the love of their Heavenly Father. I could, as I have said before, have left Hugh very well there, but I feel I cannot.

Don't you know how when you have been telling a story to little children, there is an eager look in their faces after the quick question, "And what happened after?" We all like to see the conclusions of things begun, to watch to the end. Well, we cannot see to the end of everything, and the results of much that we do we can never know on earth. But it seems a pity that I should not tell you that Hugh went on bravely and well, passing through life a good man.

So many girls and boys go away into the world, out of home reach and home influence, and the cares of that world undo all they have learnt, and choke the good seed. If they do not kill it entirely, they harm it for the time.

So many young people give their hearts to their Lord, and live for Him so long as they are in the freshness of youth, and have the shelter and safety of home around them. Then

when they go amongst others, whose life is utterly different from their own, they change. They lose the "meek light of early faith," and wander from the safe paths and the simple love that bound them as by golden links to God and their heavenly home; and though they may not perish, sometimes it is only after they have passed through many years, and a furnace of trial, that they go back and live with the old power, and to the same great end as they did in the first years of their life.

But to those who are faithful to their King this never happens. If they are living in the earnest following of Christ, He will keep them near to Himself.

If day by day and hour by hour they seek His guidance, and try and realise His presence, they will find strength for the greatest difficulties and victory after the sorest struggles. And so I should like to take you to the Priory again when Hugh was a man. He was nearly five-and-twenty when he heard of Lady Drayton's death.

He was just preparing to start for Ceylon, with a small appointment promised him, and a large amount of hope in his heart.

A few days before he was to start Mr. Carlisle

called him into his study to speak to him on some matter concerning his journey, when the afternoon post came in.

There was a letter from a lawyer to Hugh, the substance of which I shall give you here.

Many years ago, when Mr. Drayton had been a rich man, Lady Drayton, his mother, made a will in favour of her dear little friend Hugh Templar. Her son then did not need the money; his family, though large, was well provided for, and Hugh, at his father's death, was left so poor that Lady Drayton always felt very glad that she had something, small though it might appear, to leave him.

Affairs changed, as you know. Mr. Drayton lost money, and was literally left dependent on his curacy. His eldest son, crippled for life, could not help him; and Lady Drayton felt that she should not do right in leaving her fortune to any one else. One day, when she was feeling very ill indeed, she drew out a short will, and asked her doctor to witness her signature. He did not ask what the paper contained, and she was too ill to enter into particulars. A very bad woman of business at any time, she only drew out that will herself,

and acted as she did to avoid discussions at her death. She then put away the paper, and time went on. Over and over again she told her son that all she had was his, and she even no longer allowed a separate purse for her own expenditure, but insisted upon his using her money as his own.

At her death the will was found; but, lacking one more witness to her signature, it was quite invalid, and as useless a document in point of law as any piece of waste paper. Then there was found the former will of ten years back, which Lady Drayton had omitted to destroy. This latter one was properly drawn out by a lawyer and signed, the signature witnessed by two people. And this will was in favour of Hugh Templar.

The lawyer wrote the details of the whole case to Hugh, and told him that he was executor to Lady Drayton's will.

Hugh read the letter attentively, and then handed it to his uncle, who put on his spectacles and carefully read the closely-written pages.

The lawyer told everything—how Lady Drayton's intention for the last years had evidently been that her son should inherit her

property, how many people could be brought up to witness that she had often expressed her wishes and intentions to them, that all was his and to be his. Yet, of course, the lawyer added, all these asseverations were useless in point of law, and the will itself was utterly valueless.

Hugh had a legal right to everything. As his uncle read the letter Hugh sat thinking.

Hugh was a tall man, with just the same sure, earnest expression in his brown eyes that he had as a child. His hair was darker, and his face as pale as ever, and when he smiled you thought it was one of the pleasantest, happiest faces you ever saw.

He knew that now, if he took this money that was really his—he had every right to it, according to man's law—that he need not go out to Ceylon. His old love for the organ was still strong in his heart, and the last summer he had spent in Germany with Gustav Valheim had only roused the old delight in music, and made him long to study and give up his life to it.

Gustav had introduced him to an old German organist who was almost fanatical about music, and Hugh and he had become great friends. If

he took this money he could go to Germany, and do as he pleased, study music, be an organist, and devote himself to the art that was so dear to him.

Yes; but was it right to take it? The devil trying to tempt him to do wrong spoke to him, clothing his maxims in the language of worldly policy and the doctrine of expedience.

"Much better take it. Indeed, why should you hesitate one moment? The money is yours. The law tells you it is. You know no one has any earthly right to it but yourself. Take it, and you need not go to Ceylon; you can follow the bent of your own inclination, you can devote yourself to music—you need not hesitate, why should you?"

"No earthly right! Ah, no." So spoke conscience, that still, small voice, so low that only an ear accustomed to listen to its sound could hear it at all. But Hugh was used to listen; and, believe me, if we hearken to that voice in all the smaller trials and lesser difficulties of life, we shall find it easier to hear it when some great temptation assails us, and some mighty perplexity is before us. The constant listening and heeding attunes the ear for its music.

“No earthly right; no, you certainly have that. You have the law of man on your side, that law to which you are bound to submit for the Lord’s sake. But there is also a higher, heavenly right, which you have *not* got to that money. In God’s sight it is not yours—no more yours than the property of your friends and neighbours. It was Lady Drayton’s intention and wish that her son should inherit what she left. She made him act while she was yet alive as if he were already in possession. Your claim arises solely through inadvertence, through the careless omission to destroy the former will, and through her ignorance that a will needs two witnesses to the signature. That will may be invalid in the courts of earth; it is valid in the sight of God. Can you—dare you take it? That Mr. Drayton wants the money is no reason for your resigning your claim; that does not influence the question one fraction. Were he rich as the Queen, he would have as strong a claim upon it. Were you homeless, houseless in the very streets for want of money, were you penniless and utterly friendless, you would still be without excuse. You should not take it. It is not yours.”

Hugh listened. Then he thought of the music and all he might have if he chose.

Bending his head on his hands, he remained perfectly still, praying with all his heart for strength. Then he looked up and met his uncle's eyes fixed upon him. They mutely asked him what he would do; though Mr. Carlisle by this time knew his nephew well enough to know quite well what to expect from him.

"I shall not take it," said Hugh, briefly.

Mr. Carlisle had forgotten all about Hugh's desire to be an organist. He thought it an absurd idea, and dismissed it very soon. He could not know that it lived strong as ever in Hugh's heart, and he could never divine how tremendous a sacrifice Hugh was now making in setting aside what could have granted his desire.

The higher law—God's law—had obliged Hugh to act as he was now doing.

"I could not take it," he repeated. "In point of law it may be mine; but I should feel a thief if I acted upon that former will, when every wish and action of my dear old friend's life latterly has shown that she meant all that the invalid will shows to be her desire."

"You are right, my boy," said Mr. Carlisle. Some years ago he might have called it a Quixotic idea. But not now.

"I shall write at once," said Hugh, who liked acting decidedly and soon. "Of course the valid will must be acted upon as a matter of legal form; but I shall say that after that I resign all again to its rightful owner."

"I know what I should like you to give as your reason," said Mr. Carlisle.

"What, Uncle Frank?" asked Hugh, pausing, pen in hand, before beginning to write.

"The words on that old seal you lent me the other day—'*Noblesse oblige.*'"

Hugh smiled.

He was not thinking of his sacrifice, of there being anything worthy of praise in what he was doing, of his relinquishing his long-cherished plan of studying just when it was placed as a possibility within his reach—a plan to devote much time to music. He was not thinking of these. He was only wondering how he could for a moment even have listened to the tempter, when he was in honour bound and of necessity compelled to act as he now did.

For the honour of his Lord, for the sake of allegiance to his King, he was bound to act up to the spirit of the motto that he had made his own, by carrying its principles into his life—
“*Noblesse oblige.*”



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